



J. TYLER McCAULEY
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-2766
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

April 19, 2005

TO: Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair
Supervisor Yvonne B. Burke
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

FROM: J. Tyler McCauley
Auditor-Controller

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be "J. Tyler McCauley", is written over the printed name.

SUBJECT: **GROUP HOME PROGRAM MONITORING REPORT – DRICE HOMES
INC., DRICE HOUSE AND PEANUTS GROUP HOMES**

We have completed a review of Drice House and Peanuts Group Homes (Group Home or Agency) operated by Drice Homes, Inc. Each Group Home contracts with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Probation Department (Probation).

Drice House Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 7-14 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Drice House Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Peanuts Group Home is a six-bed facility, which provides care for boys ages 13-18 years who exhibit behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties. At the time of the monitoring visit, Peanuts Group Home was providing services for six Los Angeles County DCFS children.

Drice Homes, Inc., Group Homes are located in the Second District.

Scope of Review

The purpose of the review was to determine whether the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. Additionally, the review covered basic child safety and licensing issues, and included an evaluation of the Agency's Program Statement, internal policies and procedures, child case records, facility inspections, and

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interviews with two children placed in each Group Home at the time of the review. Interviews with the residents were designed to obtain their perspectives on the program services provided by the Agency, and to ensure adherence to the Foster Youth Bill of Rights.

Summary of Findings

Generally, the Agency was providing the services outlined in their Program Statement. However, the Agency needs to address various areas where improvements are needed. Drice House and Peanuts Group Homes need to develop Needs and Services Plans that are realistic and measurable; develop comprehensive quarterly reports; and ensure that residents are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Attached is a detailed report of the review findings.

Review of Report

We discussed our report with the Agency's management. The Agency's management is required to provide a corrective action plan to the Children's Group Home Ombudsman within 15 business days from the postmark date of this report. We thank the management and staff for their cooperation during our review.

If you have any questions, please contact me, or have your staff contact Mike Pirolo (626) 293-1110.

JTM:MP:CC:cr

c: David E. Janssen, Chief Administrative Officer
David Sanders, Ph.D., Director, DCFS
Paul Higa, Chief Probation Officer
Ann Drice, Ph.D., Executive Director, Drice Group Homes, Inc.
Violet Varona-Lukens, Executive Officer
Public Information Office
Audit Committee

**Drice Homes, Inc.
Drice House Group Home
3507 West 58th Place
Los Angeles, CA 90043
Phone: (323) 293-5582
License No.: 191801569
Rate Classification Level: 8**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Drice House Group Home is a large facility located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is well maintained, nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. There were no observable safety hazards.

The interior of the Group Home is generally neat and clean. The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated and maintained. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks.

The Group Home maintains age appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. There are books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible, appropriately dated, and properly stored.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

Both residents Needs and Services Plan (NSPs) are current. However, one NSP is not comprehensive and does not have realistic or measurable goals. There is documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly report for one resident is current, comprehensive, and appropriately focused on the goals of the NSP. The other resident's quarterly report was not comprehensive.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendations**1. Drice Homes, Inc., management:**

- a. Develop Needs and Services Plans that are realistic and measurable.**
- b. Develop comprehensive quarterly reports that address goals in each resident's Needs and Services Plan.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services**Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews****Sample size for resident interviews: Two****Comments:**

Both residents are attending school. Their records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. However, one resident has failing grades. According to the Group Home Administrator, the resident had frequent trancies and displayed an overall lack of interest in school and in classroom activities. The resident has been enrolled in another school in an attempt to engage him academically and to improve his grades. Residents reported that they are provided with a tutor and a sufficient amount of daily educational stimulation away from school.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The

residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for one case file

Comments:

The resident has a current court authorization for psychotropic medication. There was no documentation to confirm that the child is routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

2. Drice Homes, Inc., management ensure that residents are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with most staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. Residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

Residents are provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

**Drice Peanuts Group Home
1100 West 40th Place
Los Angeles, CA 90037
Phone: (323) 296-2798
License No.: 191801729
Rate Classification Level: 8**

I. Facility and Environment

Method of assessment – Observation

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Peanuts Group Home is a large facility located in a residential community. The Group Home is clean, spacious, and comfortable. The Group Home is nicely landscaped, and blends well with the other homes on the block. However, there is a broken table and chair in the backyard. There were no observable safety hazards.

The décor provides a home-like atmosphere. The common rooms are nicely decorated. The resident bedrooms are spacious, comfortable, and personalized to each child's desire with posters, pictures, and knick-knacks. However, there are improvements needed.

In the dining room a glass windowpane is missing, and there is writing on the wall in the recreation room.

The Group Home maintains age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment. There are also board games, a TV, and a VCR. Books and resource materials, including a computer with a variety of programs, are also available.

There is a sufficient supply of frozen food, meat, canned goods, bakery items, and fresh fruit. The food is accessible and appropriately dated.

Recommendations

1. Drice Homes, Inc., management:

- a. Remove the broken table and chair from the backyard.**
- b. Replace the missing windowpane in the dining room.**
- c. Remove the writing from the wall in the recreation room.**
- d. Repair/replace the weight bench.**

II. Program Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The residents meet the Agency's population criteria as outlined in their Program Statement. Residents received a complete initial diagnostic assessment after being admitted into the Agency's program.

The Needs and Services Plans (NSPs) for both residents are current. However, one resident's NSP was not comprehensive and did not reflect a realistic, measurable, and time specific plan. There is documentation to support the placement workers' participation in the development and update of the NSPs.

The quarterly report for one resident is current, comprehensive, and appropriately focused on the goals of the NSP. The other resident's quarterly report was not comprehensive.

The residents are provided with psychological testing, emotional and developmental counseling as required by the Program Statement. Case files reflect adequate documentation to show evidence of residents receiving regular individual and/or group therapy.

Recommendations

2. Drice Homes, Inc., management:

- a. Develop Needs and Services Plans that are realistic and measurable.**
- b. Develop comprehensive quarterly reports that address goals in each resident's Needs and Services Plan.**

III. Educational and Emancipation Services

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents are attending school. Their records contain current semester report cards and/or progress reports. Residents reported that they are provided with a sufficient

amount of daily educational stimulation away from school and feel that the Group Home is supportive of their academic progress.

The Agency's program includes the development of residents' daily living skills. The residents are involved in the planning and preparation phase of meals. Hygiene care is discussed as needed and employment preparation encouraged.

Residents are offered the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs as appropriate.

Residents have the opportunity to work and manage their own money.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

IV. Recreation and Activities

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides its residents opportunities to participate in recreational activities. The residents expressed satisfaction with the recreational activities and stated that the recreation schedules are followed.

The Group Home utilizes local community organizations for recreational and program resources. The residents reported that they participate in planning some of the activities. The residents have free time and are able to participate in self-selected activities.

Transportation is provided to and from the activities.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.

V. Psychotropic Medication

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents for two case files

Comments:

Residents have current court authorizations for psychotropic medications. However, there was no documentation to confirm that the children are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.

Medication distribution logs are properly maintained.

Recommendation

- 3. Drice Homes, Inc., management ensure that residents are routinely seen by the prescribing psychiatrist.**

VI. Personal Rights

Method of assessment – Resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

Residents expressed satisfaction with the Agency and its staff. Residents participate in an initial orientation and the Group Home's policies and procedures are posted. Residents reported that they feel safe in the Group Home and that there is no interference with their daily living functions.

Residents reported satisfaction with the taste of the food and with their ability to participate in menu development. They reported that there is sufficient staff supervision and expressed satisfaction with the quality of their interactions with most staff. Residents feel there is at least one staff member they can easily talk to and trust.

Residents reported that they are assigned chores to complete on a daily basis that are reasonable and not too demanding. Residents are able to have visitors and make and receive personal telephone calls. They are permitted to contact their workers, attorneys, and family members as needed. Residents are able to attend weekly religious services of their choice and feel that the Agency is respectful of their cultural lifestyles. The Agency allows the residents to celebrate holidays.

Residents reported that the discipline policies are consistently enforced and that there are fair and appropriate consequences for inappropriate behavior.

Residents are aware of their right to refuse medication.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section

VII. Clothing and Allowance

Method of assessment – Review of relevant documents and resident interviews

Sample size for resident interviews: Two

Comments:

The Agency provides appropriate clothing, items of necessity, and allowances to the residents. The Group Home supplies its residents with the required \$50 monthly clothing allowance and the residents are given the opportunity to select their own clothes. Clothing provided to residents is of good quality and of sufficient quantity.

The Agency provides residents with the required minimum base allowance, which they are able to increase according to the Agency's behavioral system. Residents are permitted to spend their allowances as they choose.

The Agency provides residents with adequate personal care items and adequate storage.

Residents are provided with regular opportunities to maintain photo albums/life books.

Recommendations

There are no recommendations for this section.